

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending in this application. Currently no claims stand allowed. The Office Action rejected claims 1-29. In this response, applicant has amended claim 2 but has not otherwise amended the pending claims. Applicant submits that the pending claims are patentable for at least the reasons discussed below.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112 of Claim 2

The Office Action rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended claim 2 solely to overcome this rejection. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) of Claims 1-29

The Office Action rejected claims 1-29 as being anticipated by Gupta et al. (U.S. Patent 6,389,532). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant submits that the cited art does not anticipate the claimed invention. For example, claim 1 recites a method for message authentication, the method comprising, in part, employing a private component of “*a key pair associated with a domain*” to digitally sign a message if the message originates from “*a sender’s address associated with the domain*”, and providing the digitally signed message to a recipient if the public component of the key pair “*verifies that the digitally signed message originated from the domain associated with the sender’s address.*” As described in the specification, the invention enables verification that a message identifying a certain sender address actually originated from a valid domain that authorized the use of that sender’s address for messaging. See Specification, pp. 4 and 6. Furthermore, it is important to note that a domain is an indirect representation of an address. The domain name is resolvable by a Domain Name System (DNS) into an address for a resource, it is not the address itself.

Unlike the claimed invention, however, Gupta does not disclose or suggest enabling authentication of the *domain* from which a message purportedly originates. Rather, Gupta, which is directed only to IP multicasting (single message sent to multiple destinations at once), describes the use of digital signatures to verify that a sender of a multicast message packet actually belongs to a particular multicast group. Furthermore, for Gupta's senders and receivers to communicate multicast messages, they must affirmatively join a multicast group by accessing a multicast group address that has been previously set up by a multicast group owner. Column 1, lines 21-25. Significantly, no such affirmative action is taught by the claimed invention.

Also, the Office Action asserts that the key pair in Gupta "is clearly associated with the domain per se." However, as shown in Figure 1, Gupta's multicast group members typically belong to different domains. See Gupta, col. 3, lines 44-49, and Fig. 1. Also, there is no "domain per se" with which Gupta's multicast messages or multicast group members are associated, instead they are associated with a particular multicast group address. Thus, since the Gupta key pair is clearly associated with a particular multicast group and its address (and not with a domain), the cited reference can not anticipate at least this element of the claimed invention.

Gupta thus fails to disclose each element of the invention as claimed in claim 1. Moreover, Gupta fails to disclose each element of the invention as claimed in independent claims 14, 19, 24, 28, and 29, the elements of which are similar to, albeit different from, the elements of claim 1. Therefore, the independent claims are now in condition for allowance. Furthermore, since claims 2-13, 15-18, 20-23, and 25-27 depend from independent claims 1, 14, 19, and 24, respectively, these dependent claims are allowable for at least substantially the same reasons.

In view of the amendment above and the foregoing remarks, applicant believes that this response has addressed fully the concerns expressed in the Office Action and that this response places each of the pending claims in condition for immediate allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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